

## *Radio Stamps*

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### **Program 48 - March 4, 1995**

This is program number 48, and the third edition of *Radio Stamps* in 1995. Thank you this month to Steve Goldman of Roselle, Illinois, for a copy of an article about amateur radio stamps. It was nice to hear from Carl Wolfe of Slate Hill in New York who enjoyed the December program, about the commemorative stamps from Canada for Radio Canada International and the radio achievements of Marconi.

The subject on today's program is verified reception stamps, or QSL stamps. I hope you can help me with some information about these unique collectibles. I'll give you my mailing address in a few minutes at the end of this feature. Today's program was prompted by letters and questions from three other listeners in the United States. Bart Lee of San Francisco, California, kindly sent along a copy of an article on EKKO verified reception stamps. Dr. Adrian Peterson of Indianapolis, Indiana, sent me a copy of his super article on the history of QSL stamps from Adventist World Radio. Jerry Berg of Lexington, Massachusetts, sent along information about EKKO stamps, as well as three new-to-me QSL stamps known as Bryant, microphone and AFCCO verification stamps.

It was back in 1924 that the EKKO company in Chicago, spelled E-K-K-O, began to distribute QSL stamps. These stamp-like labels were issued to listeners by radio stations to confirm reception reports of stations in Canada, the United States and other countries. In order to receive a QSL stamp, radio listeners were required to send a reception report and a dime to a radio station. The dime was to cover the cost of checking the report and, if it was correct, to mail the stamp. The EKKO Company produced a hardbound album in 1924 for listeners to keep their verification stamps in. A revised 1926 version of the album was also advertised. EKKO stamps were popular with radio listeners before the second world war. An occasional stamp showed up on a QSL card in the early 1950s.

The EKKO stamps were not postage stamps. They were stamp-like, perforated labels with a gummed back like regular postage stamps. EKKO stamps were printed by line-engraved intaglio by the American Bank Note Company. The central design of the stamps that were sent by Canadian stations featured a beaver. To the left and right, above maple leaves, are radio towers. Scrollwork and ornamental framing provide a decorative border. The letters E-K-K-O are in the four corners of the design. The stamps from American stations, and stations in other countries, feature an eagle in the design. Each stamp was engraved in one of nine colours, and the call letters of the station, along with the words "verified reception stamp" were overprinted in either red, blue, green or black.



Some stations issued verification stamps of their own design. They were printed by letterpress in some cases, and others were embossed in metallic foil. They were produced as gummed stamps, some with perforations and some without. Custom made verification stamps were printed in a wide variety of sizes, shapes and colourful designs.

In addition to EKKO stamps, and QSL stamps custom made by radio stations, it seems that there were at least three other kinds of verification stamps in use as well. This is where I hope you can help me with information. I'd like very much to write an article about verification stamps, and I need information about Bryant Radio, microphone and AFCC stamps. The design of Bryant stamps, spelled B-r-y-a-n-t, features two radio towers with a globe between them showing the western hemisphere. The words "BRYANT RADIO", in capital letters, appears over the globe. The call sign of the radio station was printed below the towers at the bottom of the stamp. If you have information about the origin, history and use of Bryant stamps, please let me know. Microphone stamps feature an early microphone with words "RADIO STATION", in capital letters, printed across the middle. The call sign of the station appears to have been hand printed at the bottom of the stamp. It seems there were also A-F-C-O verification stamps issued by Vice-President Arthur E. Forester of NNRC. I'd certainly be grateful to receive any information about these QSL stamps that I can include in my article. Thank you for your help with this.

A similar concept of QSL stamps was developed by Adventist World Radio some 15 years ago to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Voice of Prophecy Bible Correspondence School in Poona, India. Some stamps were printed with the transmitter location and frequency, while others were left blank so that the site information could be added by a rubber stamp. An ornate certificate was available for these QSL stamps. They were sometimes attached to do-it-yourself QSL cards and, on special occasions, to regular QSL cards. QSL stamps from Adventist World Radio were first issued at the end of 1977 and their usage continued until the middle of 1985. Dr. Peterson reports that a limited number of these stamps is still available. Some were issued in 1994 to acknowledge reception reports of special events associated with the broadcasts of AWR-Latin America in April and May. Some were also issued for reports during the "Final Week of Alajuela" in April. These monitoring events were developed for North America, but reception reports from other parts of the world will be honoured with the QSL stamps while supplies last. Return postage must accompany the reports. Reception reports should be sent to AWR Special Projects, 903 Tanninger Drive, spelled T-a-n-n-i-n-g-e-r, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46239, U.S.A. The address again is AWR Special Projects, 903 Tanninger Drive, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46239, U.S.A.

Well, that's all for today's full program. I look forward to hearing from you with information about verification stamps. Here's my mailing address. Neil Carleton, that's spelled N-e-i-l C-a-r-l-e-t-o-n, P.O. Box 1644, Almonte, spelled A-l-m-o-n-t-e, Ontario, spelled O-n-t-a-r-i-o. The postal code here in Canada is K0A 1A0. The address again is Neil Carleton, P.O. Box 1644, Almonte, Ontario, K0A 1A0, Canada. Until the next time, best wishes for good listening and collecting.